DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 459 668 HE 034 567

AUTHOR	Abraham, Ansley; Jacobs, Walter R., Jr.
TITLE	Diversity in College Faculty: SREB States Address a Need. A Special Report from the Doctoral Scholars Program.
INSTITUTION	Southern Regional Education Board, Atlanta, GA.
PUB DATE	1999-00-00
NOTE	11p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Southern Regional Education Board, Publication Orders Department, 592 10th St., N.W., Atlanta, GA 30318-5790 (Stock No. 99E01, $5, plus $2.50 shipping and handling). Tel: 404-875-9211, ext. 236, Fax: 404-872-1477. For full text: http://www.sreb.org/programs/dsp/publications/Diversity.pdf.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*College Faculty; *Diversity (Student); *Doctoral Programs; *Graduate Students; Graduate Study; Higher Education; *Minority Groups; *Teacher Recruitment
IDENTIFIERS	*Southern Regional Education Board

ABSTRACT

This report describes the Doctoral Scholars Program of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), which is part of a nationwide initiative, the Compact for Faculty Diversity, to produce more minority Ph.D.s and to encourage them to seek faculty positions. The compact provides minority doctoral candidates with academic and financial support as well as personal guidance, support, and counseling. There is a great shortage of minority faculty members in the United States, and the small number of minorities on the path to doctoral degrees and faculty positions is especially serious in the areas of mathematics, science, and engineering. A diverse faculty with a variety of scholarly perspectives will produce a stronger educational experience for all students. The SREB has responded to this need through its Doctoral Scholars Program. In 1993, the SREB Doctoral Scholars Program enrolled its first class of 13 minority Ph.D. students in 5 states, and as of December 1998, 220 scholars had entered the program and there was a retention rate of 95% after only 6 years of operation. The SREB Doctoral Scholars Program works by combining multiple program components with direct services to students and a philosophy that fosters success. (SLD)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 459 668

HE

SREB

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
M.A. Sullivan
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Diversity in College Faculty:

SREB States Address a Need

A Special Report from
the Doctoral Scholars Program

HE034567

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

This report was prepared by Ansley Abraham and Walter R. Jacobs Jr. Abraham is the director of the Southern Regional Education Board's Doctoral Scholars Program, part of an alliance with the New England Board of Higher Education and the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education called the Compact for Faculty Diversity. Jacobs is a retired director of the College Board's Southern regional office and is a consultant to the compact.

More than one-third of the nation's workers are people of color. So are more than one-fourth of America's college students. But the percentage of racial/ethnic minorities who are faculty in higher education is a small fraction of the total. Nationally, about 5 percent are African-American and about 2 percent are Hispanic.

The primary reason that there are not enough racial/ethnic minority faculty members is that too few minorities earn doctoral degrees and choose to become members of the teaching and research staffs at colleges and universities.

The Southern Regional Education Board's Doctoral Scholars Program is part of a nationwide initiative, the Compact for Faculty Diversity, to produce more minority Ph.D.s and to encourage them to seek faculty positions. The compact provides minority doctoral candidates with academic and financial support as well as personal guidance, support and counseling.

We begin this report with a brief description of the long-standing problem. More importantly, we highlight what SREB states and the SREB are doing to solve it and what state leaders can do to support their state's efforts.

Mark Musick
President
Southern Regional Education Board

Diversity in College Faculty: SREB States Address a Need

What is the problem?

The number of minority faculty members in America is appalling.

One-fourth of college students are people of color, but only one out of every 30 faculty members at predominantly white institutions is a person of color.

The problem is severe. Even if all 1,315 black Ph.D. recipients in 1996 opted for faculty careers, only about one-third of the nation's 3,800 colleges and universities could add one new black faculty member each year. If field of study were a consideration, the problem would appear even worse, because almost half of the Ph.D.s awarded to black graduates are in the field of education. Only 3 percent of the total 42,415 Ph.D.s are black graduates, and the record is no better for Hispanics or Native Americans.

A recent report on new doctorates awarded shows that 14 Southern states in 1995 did not produce one black Ph.D. in either of the key fields of mathematics or computer science. These shockingly small numbers of mathematics and computer science Ph.D.s are part of a larger picture that is almost as distressing.

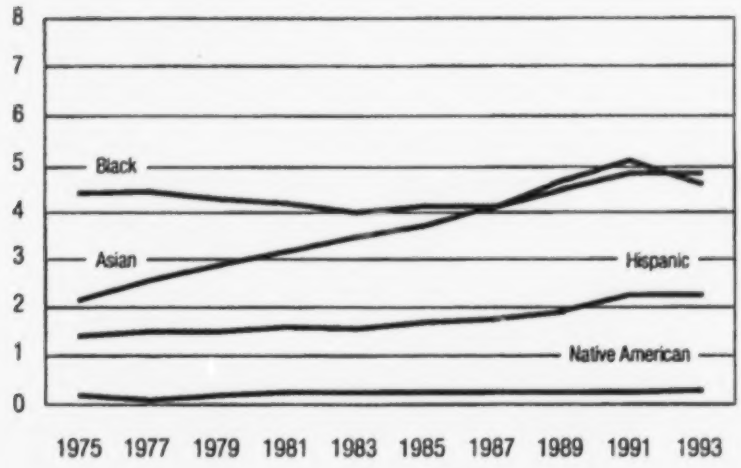
In the SREB region, there are 161,000 faculty positions at public and private institutions. Only 8 percent of these positions are held by black faculty. Fewer than half of these black faculty members (about 6,000) are teaching at predominantly white institutions. In other words, there are more black faculty teaching at the region's 91 historically black institutions than teaching at the 1,000 predominantly white institutions.

Higher education is making progress in increasing minority students and support staff. However, there has been almost no progress in increasing the number of minorities in college and university faculties, neither in the SREB states nor nationwide.

It takes years to become a college faculty member. In any year, the number of students receiving doctorates is much smaller than the number receiving undergraduate degrees. This number is a tiny fraction of the number enrolled in college and an even smaller fraction of the number graduating from high school.

A smaller percentage of minority students than white students graduate from high school and from college, go to graduate school and eventually receive doctorates.

Percentage of Minority Faculty in the United States, 1975 to 1993



Source: Staff survey, National Center for Education Statistics, Washington, D.C.

A doctoral degree is the key to becoming a faculty member. The small number of minorities on the path to doctoral degrees and faculty positions is especially serious in the areas of math, science and engineering. Lower enrollment in these fields and the competition from business and industry reduce the number of minorities who seek employment as faculty.

For example, a 1998 Southern Education Foundation study of 19 Southern states found that about half of the 553 doctoral degrees awarded to black students in 1995 were in the field of education. Many of these states, if they produced black Ph.D.s outside of the field of education, typically produced only one per year in the key fields of science and mathematics.

Why is faculty diversity important?

- Because higher education now involves most of America, its faculty and leadership should reflect the nation's diverse population.
- A diverse faculty with a variety of scholarly perspectives will produce a stronger educational experience for all students.
- Colleges and universities must take into account that they have to serve an increasingly diverse student body and have to prepare students to deal with this diversity. The faculty should reflect this diversity.

- Soon after the beginning of the next century, one in three Americans will be of ethnic minority background, and by 2050, according to projections, one in two Americans will be an ethnic minority. The nation's economic health will depend upon whether these people are a successful and integral part of society.

What is being done to increase faculty diversity on America's campuses?

While faculty diversity is a consideration in most SREB states, efforts thus far have not yielded significant results. In addition, the financial incentives for states or institutions to promote diversity have dwindled over the last few years. Foundation support for graduate fellowship programs — particularly minority graduate fellowships — has waned over the last 10 years.

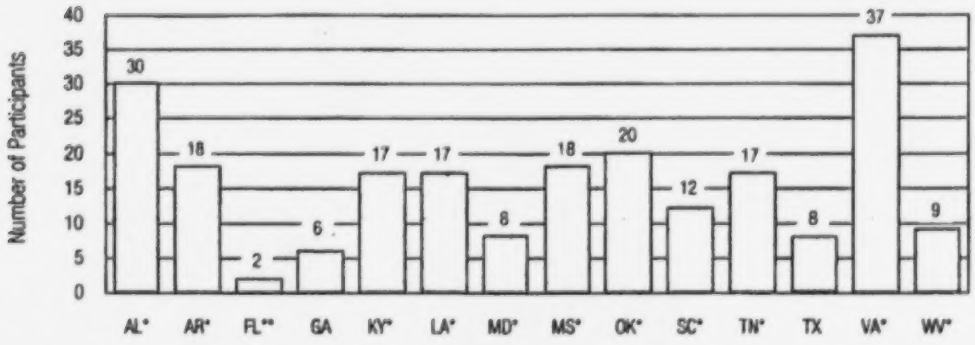
The SREB responded to this situation by helping its member states channel resources into a new, multistate initiative called the SREB Doctoral Scholars Program. The program has two goals: (1) to increase the number of minority students who earn Ph.D.s and become college faculty in fields in which they are most underrepresented; and (2) to create a state-based, self-sustaining program — operating independently, without foundation support — to help produce more Ph.D.s.

In 1992 the SREB began an 18-month study of published reports on the achievement of minority graduate students and conducted site visits to promising programs that supported minority graduate students. The SREB's study found that minority graduate students listed two primary barriers to their completion of doctoral degrees: a lack of finances and a feeling of isolation within their departments. The SREB identified key features of the graduate education programs in which minorities were successful. These features included undergraduate recruiting and research experience, graduate school orientation and survival

SREB Doctoral Scholars:

- are enrolled in 50 institutions in 21 states (including 14 SREB states);
- represent 22 fields of study, of which the top five are biological/health sciences, psychology, engineering, history and English;
- represent most major racial/ethnic groups — African-Americans (80 percent), Hispanics (10 percent), Asians/Pacific Islanders (4 percent) and Native Americans (6 percent); and
- have begun careers at institutions in SREB states, most in tenured track positions (16 of 23), after they have earned doctorates.

Doctoral Scholars in SREB States, 1993 to 1999



* These states have made a long-term funding commitment; for others funding is primarily through the foundations supporting the SREB's start-up years of the program.

** Florida's McKnight Doctoral Fellowship Program enrolls a significant number of students in Florida.

Note: One scholar is supported by Howard University in the District of Columbia.

tips, mentoring, financial support, supportive environments, and community-building and networking.

Many initiatives use one or two of these factors, but very few programs combine most or all of these features. The well-documented McKnight Doctoral Fellowship Program, a component of the Florida Education Fund, successfully incorporates these features. The McKnight program became the model for the SREB Doctoral Scholars Program, which modified it and expanded it for use on a multistate basis. Florida received a major grant and matched it to fund its program, but it would be difficult for any other state to duplicate this success. However, SREB states working together can — and have.

By pooling several states' efforts to work together, the Doctoral Scholars Program can accomplish its second goal: to create a state-based, self-sustaining program to help more graduate students earn Ph.D.s.

In 1993, the SREB Doctoral Scholars Program enrolled its first class of 13 minority Ph.D. students in five states. As of December 1998, 220 scholars had entered the program. By February 1999, 23 had completed their Ph.D.s and only 12 had withdrawn. These numbers represent a retention rate of 95 percent after six years of operation — remarkable, considering that national data show that only 50 percent of all Ph.D. students complete the degree and, worse, that only 37 percent of minorities finish.

In 1994, at the encouragement of the Pew Charitable Trust and the Ford Foundation, the SREB formed an alliance with the New England and Western regional education boards. The

purpose of this alliance is to share resources, create additional opportunities for students and bring a national focus to the shortage of minority faculty members at colleges and universities. The alliance, called the Compact for Faculty Diversity, provides financial and academic support, as well as personal guidance and counseling, for minorities who have been accepted into doctoral degree programs and who seek to become college and university faculty.

Each region administers its own program for doctoral scholars. This arrangement enables each regional program to benefit from the relationships among regional organizations and state leaders in education and government. Together, the three regions represent 37 states. To date, the compact has served 352 scholars (262 doctoral scholars and 90 dissertation scholars) in 88 institutions in 33 states.

How does the SREB Doctoral Scholars Program work?

The SREB's strategy combines multiple program components with direct services to students and a philosophy of "we know you can succeed, and we will help you succeed." This philosophy drives the daily program services that motivate, energize and inspire students to deal appropriately with the rigors of graduate study.

The SREB Doctoral Scholars Program, funded through relatively modest investments by foundations and individual states, is attracting national attention and is getting results for the participating states. Sixteen of the 23 graduates already have accepted offers from colleges and universities in SREB states and are in full-time positions.

Financial Characteristics of Awards

Doctoral Scholars Award (five years)

SREB and participating states provide:

- $12,000 stipend (three years)
- $500 academic support
- $1,500 annual institute allowance for scholar (three years) and faculty adviser/mentor (two years)
- Regional program services until scholar completes degree

University provides:

- $12,000 stipend (fourth and fifth years, if necessary)
- Tuition and fees (up to five years)

Dissertation-Year Award (one year)

SREB and participating states provide:

- $12,000 stipend (one year)
- $1,000 annual institute allowance (one year, scholar only)
- $1,000 research allowance (one year)
- Regional program services until scholar completes degree

University provides:

- Tuition and fees (one year)

The program consists of seven key components: Doctoral Scholars Award, Dissertation-Year Award, regional program services, departmental support, State Incentive Matching Fund, professional development and the annual Institute on Teaching and Mentoring. Many scholarship programs provide only one service (financial support), or maybe two of these services, but the SREB Doctoral Scholars Program is not a "check and a handshake" program. The annual Institute on Teaching and Mentoring best illustrates the critical features of the Doctoral Scholars Program.

- **Regional program services** — Direct services to students include regular contact by SREB staff; reviews of student progress and grades; a newsletter; counseling/advocacy; career counseling and placement; and subscriptions to SREB publications. Faculty members working with the scholars receive professional development to help them be more successful in recruiting and retaining students and helping them graduate.
- **Departmental support** — The Doctoral Scholars Program works to promote good practices in departments and to improve the graduate school/departmental environment, including advisement, research and teaching, and job-search assistance.
- **State Incentive Matching Fund** — Approximately $1.5 million of the foundation funds available to the SREB through the Compact for Faculty Diversity goes to SREB states as matching fellowship funds.
- **Professional development** — The Doctoral Scholars Program designates funds to support scholars' research and publication activities, which increase employment opportunities.
- **Institute on Teaching and Mentoring** — The annual institute unites the three regional doctoral scholars programs in the Compact for Faculty Diversity and has become the single most recognizable feature of the compact. The institute gives scholars the opportunity to learn and to share tips for success in graduate school. Scholars form a "community" of colleagues with similar goals and challenges and build relationships with people who already have been successful in graduate school. They work with their faculty advisers and meet faculty from around the nation who have overcome the challenges the scholars now face. Scholars also learn additional research and teaching skills through a series of carefully planned seminars and discussions led by experts in those fields.

What should your state and universities do?

Be aware that the SREB Doctoral Scholars Program works. After six years of operation, the program has maintained a 95 percent retention rate, and about 70 percent of the program graduates have begun academic careers, most in tenured track positions.

What do education and government leaders need to do to continue the success of the Doctoral Scholars Program and to increase its benefits to states and students?

- States and institutions can make long-term financial and policy commitments. The 11 states that already have committed to long-term support of the program are Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.
- All SREB states can get involved in the Doctoral Scholars Program. The more states and universities involved, the stronger the program.
- All SREB colleges and universities that grant Ph.D.s should be involved. These institutions should improve the graduate environment by establishing guidelines for "good practices" so that minority recruitment, retention and success become the norm.
- Foundations can continue their assistance as incentive for states and institutions to increase their financial commitments.
- States and institutions can adopt strategies that encourage minority students to pursue and obtain advanced degrees.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

NOTICE

Reproduction Basis

☑ This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket)" form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.

☐ This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").